

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7880

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3206

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CS

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF GOCR DECISION TO INVITE

DEPARTURE OF NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION

REKGC STATE 180576; SAN JOSE 3082

1. ON AUGUST 14, PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE ON THE FOLLOWING DAY FROM COSTA RICA, THE SIX-MAN NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION RELEASED TO THE PRESS A DECLARATION IN WHICH IT EXPLAINED THAT IT WOULD ABIDE BY PRESIDENT ODUBER'S DECISION THAT THEY LEAVE THE COUNTRY AND THAT THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THE RECEPTION GIVEN THEM WHILE IN COSTA RICA. THE PRESS RELEASE, AS REPORTED, STATED THAT THEIR INTENTIONS INCLUDED STRENGTHENING THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THROUGH COMMERCIAL RELATIONS THAT THEY HOPED TO ESTABLISH. THE NORTH KOREANS ALSO STATED THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER HAD ASKED THAT THEY DELAY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS THE OPENING OF THEIR MISSION IN COSTA RICA AND THAT THEY WOULD RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY TO WORK OUT FURTHER DETAILS FOR THE EVENTUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESIDENTIAL EMBASSY.

2. ON AUGUST 17TH, VICE-MINISTER OF FOREIGN RELATIONS VICTOR HUGO ROMAN, APPARENTLY RESPONDING LARGELY TO
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A ""LA REPUBLICA" EDITORIAL ASKING THE GOVERNMENT FOR

CLARIFICATION OF ITS REASONS FOR EXPELLING THE NORTHKOREANS, EXPLAINED THAT THE GOCR HAS ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SEVERAL COUNTRIES WITH WHOM IT HAS NOT EXCHANGED MISSIONS BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT JUDGED CONDITIONS PROPITIOUS FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE. DR. ROMAN ZONT ON TO SAY THAT THE GOCR HAD CATEGORICALLY TOLD THE NORTH KOREANS THAT IT DID NOT CONSIDER THE MOMENT OPPORTUNE OR DESIREABLE FOR TTZ ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTH KOREAN EMBASSY IN COSTA RICA. HE SAID THAT AS THE NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION CONTINUED TO REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY AFTER THIS POSITION HAD BEEN EXPLAINED TO IT, THE NORTH KOREANS WERE ADVISED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THEIR PRESENCE HAD TERMINATED. DR. ROMAN ADDED THAT THE NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION UNDERSTOOD THE POSITION OF THE GOCR AND IMPLIED THAT IT WAS NOT OFFENDED BY THIS POSITION.

3. COMMENT: JUDGING FROM THE NORTH KOREAN STATEMENT BEFORE ITS DEPARTURE AND ROMAN'S AVOIDANCE IN HIS STATEMENT OF TYM PROBABLE RETURN TO COSTA RICA BY THE NORTH KOREANS IN SEVERAL MONTHS, IT SEEMS THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER TOOK THE HIGH AND POPULAR GROUND IN EXPELLING THE NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION, BUT THAT HE AND OHSN. FACIO PROBABLY HAVE NOT CLOSED THE DOOR TO A FUTURE OVERTURE P THE NORTH KOREANS.
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